

**2013 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
FOR THE
WILDHORSE/CROOKED RIVER C&H ALLOTMENT**

INTRODUCTION

These Annual Operating Instructions are a guide for implementing grazing management activities on the **Wildhorse/Crooked River C&H Allotment** for the 2013 grazing season. This plan was developed with participation of the livestock permittees at the Annual Operating Instruction meeting held at the Weiser Ranger District Office on May 29, 2013. The interdisciplinary resource personnel and livestock permittees who participated in development of this plan were Permittees Rod & Darla Johnson, Casey Anderson and Rangeland Management Specialists Andy Bumgarner and Jennifer McMorris.

These instructions are a guideline for grazing management. It is necessary to contact the Forest Service if there are any changes or additions to these instructions through out the grazing season. Refer to Part 2 of your term grazing permit for general terms and conditions which apply to these Annual Operating Instructions.

Permitted Use			
Permittee	Allotment	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Rocky Comfort Cattle Company, LLC	Wildhorse/Crooked River***	308 cow/calf pairs	6/15-10/9
Lorilyn M. Quilliam	Wildhorse/Crooked River	100 cow/calf pairs	5/16-6/7
Rod & Darla Johnson	Wildhorse/Crooked River	214 cow/calf pairs	5/20-10/10

*** Permit includes Wildhorse/Crooked River, No Biz and Hungry On/Off C&H Allotments.

2013 Authorized Use			
Permittee	Allotment	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Rocky Comfort Cattle Company, LLC	Wildhorse/Crooked River	297 cow/calf pairs	7/6-10/15
Lorilyn M. Quilliam	Wildhorse/Crooked River	90 cow/calf pairs	5/16-6/7
Rod & Darla Johnson	Wildhorse/Crooked River	214 cow/calf pairs	5/20-10/10

Permitted Livestock Brands

Permitted Pack & Saddle Stock

COMPLIANCE

This AOI is made part of the Term Grazing Permit consistent with Part 1, item 3, and Part 2, item 8(a). Situations may develop during the grazing seasons which require changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some part of these instructions, contact the District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions. The season of use is especially dependent upon weather conditions (annual precipitation) which influences annual forage production and range readiness. The District Ranger's authority to modify term grazing permitted use is further described in Part 2, Section 8 (b) & (c) of your permit.

Refer to your term grazing permit, part 2 (general terms and conditions) and part 3 (special terms and conditions) for a list of general and specific management practices required by the permittee.

All livestock feed or straw brought on to the forest is required to be certified weed free.

PREVIOUS YEAR GRAZING RESULTS

2012 Authorized Use			
Permittee	Allotment	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Rocky Comfort Cattle Company, LLC	Wildhorse/Crooked River	297 cow/calf pairs	7/6-10/15
Lorilyn M. Quilliam	Wildhorse/Crooked River	90 cow/calf pairs	5/16-6/7
Rod & Darla Johnson	Wildhorse/Crooked River	195 cow/calf pairs	5/20-10/10

2012 Utilization			
Area	Date	Upland/Riparian	Percent Utilization
Ditch Creek	10/24/12	Riparian	17%

BILLING

Grazing fees of \$ 1.35/HM must be paid before livestock are authorized to enter the National Forest. Payment must be made to: USDA Forest Service, c/o Citibank, P.O. Box 301550, Los Angeles, California 90030-1550. The Council District Office must receive confirmation from the Citibank Lockbox that payment has been made prior to cattle entering the Forest.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

2013 Grazing Rotation			
Permittee	Unit	Livestock Numbers	Season of Use
Rocky Comfort Cattle Company, LLC	Wildhorse/Crooked River	297 cow/calf pairs	7/6-10/15
Lorilyn M. Quilliam	Wildhorse/Crooked River	90 cow/calf pairs	5/16-6/7
Rod & Darla Johnson	Wildhorse/Crooked River	214 cow/calf pairs	5/20-10/10

The season of use dates are tentative and may vary according to range conditions and utilization levels within the pastures. Pastures move dates will vary and may be shortened or extended as conditions warrant.

Quilliam: Turn on from private land along Wildhorse River. Move along Wildhorse drainage breaks staying primarily north of the Wildhorse River road # 070, ending at the forest boundary.

Rocky Comfort Cattle Company: South of Powerline – Turn out in No Biz Basin in early June and move across top of Cuddy Mountain in July, staying above Crooked River in August. Move along Crooked River in September. Gather at Grizzly Springs and trail to the base on the Ditch Creek road, coordinating with Johnson.

Johnson: North of Powerline - Turn out 50 pair in Coyote Gulch, 164 pair in lower Ditch Creek; then move between mid-July and August 1st up Ditch Creek draw on top of ridge; then move towards Moonshine mid-August to September 1st; coming off the Forest by October 10th.

There are two known population of Northern Idaho Ground Squirrel located within the Wildhorse/Crooked River Allotment. One is located on the ridge top between the Wildhorse/Crooked River and North Hornet allotments. The second is located in the Paradise Flat area. By early August utilization must be no greater than 40 percent. Trailing through these areas, as well as salting within ¼ mile of these sites is prohibited. All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) or Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs) are not authorized off roads near NIDGS sites.

In the event a designated mitigation measure fails to protect a species listed under the Endangered Species Act, a change in the authorized grazing activity will occur. If proper utilization levels are reached, then livestock will be moved to the next grazing area or off the forest. If livestock grazing does not comply with the terms and conditions of these Annual Operating Instructions, then the Forest Service policy and procedures dealing with administrative permit actions will be followed.

Notify the Forest Service at least 5 days before you turn onto the allotment of when and where turnout will occur so that a count can be made if desired.

STANDARDS AND GUIDES

The following are specific utilization standards and guidelines from the July 2003 Forest Plan. Utilization percentages are by weight and are the maximum allowed.

RAST01 - Maximum forage utilization of representative areas within each pasture shall not exceed the values shown at the end of the growing season. Variation in utilization standards in order to achieve specific vegetative management objectives shall occur with a site-specific or project-level decision according to direction in FSM 1922.5.

- a) Riparian Areas: Maximum 45 percent use or retain a minimum 4 inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first.
- b) Upland Vegetative Cover Types: Early season or season long pastures – 40 percent use. Vegetative slow growth, after seed ripe conditions, or late season pastures – 50 percent use.

In cattle allotments where riparian area restoration is an objective (Upper Crooked River and Lower Crooked Creek subwatersheds, and the Wildhorse River drainages), grazing systems should be designed to incorporate the following parameters where appropriate (RAGU02):

- a. Provide residual vegetative cover (at least 6 inches of hydric vegetation) either through regrowth or rest treatments for at least 75 percent of the years in a rotation cycle.

- b. Reduce the duration of riparian area grazing periods where needed. Grazing period reduction may be especially needed in the fall where riparian deciduous woody species are an important riparian vegetation component.
- c. Design grazing periods to take advantage of favorable seasonal livestock dispersal behavior (examples: spring use of uplands, due to wet riparian conditions, late fall upland use, due to cold temperatures, poor dispersal during “hot” season).
- d. Incorporate sufficient growing season rest to provide good vigor, physiological needs, and regeneration of all riparian plants.
- e. Where deciduous trees and shrubs are important in the composition, modify the frequency of grazing periods, reduce the grazing duration, or reduce grazing intensity to levels that provide for recovery/maintenance of healthy diverse trees and shrubs.

IMPROVEMENTS

All range improvements must be maintained prior to turning livestock into the unit scheduled for use. If an existing range improvement has been properly maintained but requires reconstruction, a cooperative effort can be made between the Forest Service and permittee to reconstruct the development, depending on material availability. Those projects to which the permittee contributes normally receive higher priority for funding by the Forest Service.

Maintenance of spring developments is vitally important to the health of your livestock and to the grazing allotment. If you are aware of spring developments that require reconstruction or extensive maintenance, please discuss this with your Rangeland Management Specialist.

The division fence on Cuddy Mountain between the Wildhorse/Crooked River and East Pine/Rush Creek allotments is to be set up by Rocky Comfort Cattle Company and laid down by the East Pine/Rush Creek permittees.

Coyote Gulch #2 Spring is currently not getting water to the trough. In last years’ AOI meeting the Johnsons indicated that they had found the spring source and a broken pipe above the trough. It is their responsibility to maintain this spring. Please notify the forest service when this maintenance has been performed. Tamarack Spring is located in the head of Ditch Creek above the Ditch Creek Road and needs the trough replaced. The forest service will provide a tire trough for you to replace the old one. Contact us when you would like to pick up the tire trough.

For a list of assigned maintenance of structural improvements as well as maintenance standards see part 3 of your term grazing permit.

PERMITTEE/RIDER INSTRUCTIONS

Part of good cattle management is riding to assure proper cattle distribution. In particular we want to insure that the stream banks and meadows aren't over used. These riparian areas are considered key areas and will be monitored. When an area has reached maximum allowable use levels cattle will be removed from that area and kept from returning. Keeping cattle off select areas and in areas of less use serves to prolong the time cattle can expect to stay in an area.

If cattle are in the final area of the rotation sequence and utilization standards are reached, then they will have to be removed from the allotment.

Livestock in units outside the season of use or on an allotment other than the one permitted, is a violation of the terms and conditions of the Term Grazing Permit.

Salting

Salting is restricted to the following:

- No less than ¼ mile from water, and not be placed in meadow bottoms.
- Placed at a minimum distance of 100 yards from open roads and out of sight from roads if possible.
- Should be moved yearly unless present salt ground is located in a rocky area where no vegetation grows.
- Unconsumed salt will be removed from the site.
- ¼ mile from timber plantations with trees less than 15 feet tall. If this can't be accomplished, the District Range and Reforestation personnel will work with you to find acceptable locations.

REQUIRED REPORTING

All requests for refunds or credits for unused portion of grazing fees for Forest System Lands must be received in the Council or Weiser Ranger District office by March 1 following the grazing season.

We are requesting you to report actual use information for each unit grazed because we are required to report this grazing use to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). This information is also very important when conducting future allotment analysis. Any format is acceptable. If you would like a Forest Service form or have any questions about what information to include in the Actual Use Report, please call Andy at 208-253-0114 or 208-549-4262. **Actual Use needs to be turned in no later than December 31, 2011.**

INSPECTIONS AND MONITORING

Turnout will not occur prior to range readiness. Range readiness is measured by soil moisture and plant growth. Soils may be damp, but should be firm to avoid excessive compaction due to livestock. Grass species must be a minimum of 6 inches in height. Arrowleaf balsamroot should be in bloom or past bloom.

Allotment/pasture inspections will be performed periodically throughout the grazing season by Forest Service Personnel. Livestock distribution, correct livestock location, numbers and identification, structural improvement maintenance, and utilization levels will be evaluated during these site visits. If you wish to accompany Forest Service Personnel on these inspections please contact the Rangeland Management Specialist.

COORDINATION & COOPERATION

Cooperation with neighboring permittees is encouraged, however if there are problems occurring that cannot be settled let your Rangeland Management Specialist know so that steps can be taken to correct the problems.

The Crooked River Timber Sale is located mainly within the Ditch Creek Pasture and has been completed. There will be spring and fall burning that will continue to occur for approximately the next 5 years. Road decommissioning associated with the Crooked River Timber Sale has been completed

Timber sales to the north of the Wildhorse/Crooked River Allotment have been completed however chipping will occur throughout the summer. These sales do not affect your allotment but chip vans and associated traffic should be expected on the Council/Cuprum road as well as other roads in the area of the sales.

In accordance with Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2255.1 all grazing permittees are required to conform to livestock laws and quarantine regulations of the State and Secretary of Agriculture while their livestock are on Forest Service administered land. Forest officers shall not allow livestock under quarantine to enter Forest Service administered lands until the quarantine is lifted or until the hold order is released. Grazing permits may be suspended or cancelled, in accordance with FSM 2204, for failure to comply with such laws or with any approved special rules of a recognized livestock association.

All bulls required by Idaho state law to be trichomoniasis (trich) tested shall have a current trich test prior to entering Forest Service lands. All bulls will be trich tagged for the current trich year prior to entering Forest Service lands.

Please review the AOI for consistency with our discussion at the annual meeting, if correct sign and return it to Andy.

_____/s/ Gregory S. Lesch_____
GREG LESCH
District Ranger

DATE

Rocky Comfort Cattle Company LLC
Permittee

DATE

Lorilyn M. Quilliam
Permittee

DATE

Rod & Darla Johnson
Permittee

DATE